

## **CTPAC – PROPOSAL**

**SUBJECT: Allow Maximum Chart Weight For Fix Load Vehicles Section 305.2.1**

**DATE: June 28, 2004**

**POLICY: CTPAC –WG7 – 062804 - 001**

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### **OBJECTIVE**

Change the current permit policy that identifies a fixed load vehicle as a reducible vehicle unless the design dictates the need for the extra-legal size or extra-legal weight. Then policy limits axle weights to the actual scale weight plus 700 pounds. Change Permit Policy and authorize up to maximum Green or Purple axle weight for fixed load vehicles. Authorizing chart weight for fixed loads will place them on the same level playing field as hauled loads. This change will minimize CHP enforcement, expensive and unnecessary design changes, and less Caltrans involvement. Allow Permittee to eliminate jeep if not needed.

### **BACKGROUND**

Caltrans Policy has always identified a fixed vehicle as a reducible vehicle even when the Department has no expertise to discuss many vehicle concepts. These vehicles are subject to an Inspection prior to permits being issued. The Inspectors assume all component are necessary and do not question there need while documenting all necessary information regarding the vehicle dimensions and axle weights. The Inspection report is then issued and the said vehicle is authorized an additional 700 pounds for undocumented components.

### **EXISTING DOCUMENTATION**

Caltrans Transportation Permit Manual section No. 305.2.1 Fixed Load Vehicles:

#### **305.2.1 General**

“Operations of extralegal weight fixed load vehicles under permits are controlled by the orange, green or purple standard overload charts. Permit weight will not be authorized for reasonably reducible loads or for portions of loads which are not necessary to perform a primary and singular task at the job site, e.g., drilling, servicing pumping, and testing. Extralegal weight permits may be issued for critical operational components such as sand line, drill rod, drums etc., as long as these components do not cause the weight to jump to the next higher level, etc. (green to purple)

Extralegal weight will not be allowed on motor vehicles where the equipment required to complete the prime function may be reasonably transferred to a single or tandem axle trailer and the combination complies with axle an gross weight, nor where the motor vehicle can be made legal by the addition of another axle or the use of a longer wheelbase chassis.”

This permit is issued for the movement of an “Extralegal Load” as defined in C.V.C. 320.5 when loaded at its least dimensions.

This permit is automatically canceled if the permitted dimensions and weight can be reduced to legal limits by repositioning and/or practical removal of a part, portion, or unit therefrom

This permit does not authorize extralegal weights if the load can be repositioned to stay within legal axle or axle group weights authorized in C.V.C. 35551 or 35551.5. If the load cannot be repositioned, the weights shown on the permit are authorized.

Other items may be hauled in addition to the permitted item provided they do not exceed the dimensions of the vehicle or permitted item (whichever is greater) and the loaded vehicle is of legal axle and gross weights.

## **CURRENT PRACTICE**

Transportation Permit Policy allows the Fixed Load Vehicles to obtain a transportation permit based on the original inspection weight plus 700 lbs. If fixed load vehicle exceed the permitted axle weights the permittee is issued a Misdemeanor citation along with a Permit violation, which may put their company in jeopardy of losing their permit privileges. If a fixed load has become heavier due to repairs it may be re-inspected and allowed more weight, provided that it stays within chart weight.

## **PROPOSED CHANGES**

### **Transportation Permit Conditions**

We are requesting that Fixed Load Vehicles in the Transportation Permit Manual be changed to authorize maximum Green or Purple chart weight per their respective axle weights. Like hauled loads, if the fixed load vehicle exceeds permitted axle weights, corresponding overweight citations are applicable.

## **BENEFITS / IMPACT / JUSTIFICATION**

### **BENEFITS**

Safety is not jeopardized in any way. This change will increase safety by making it easier to be compliant with Caltrans weight policy. Currently due the fact that if you're close to being legal permit weight, even though you're not necessarily over your chart weight for your axle, you are more apt to avoid scale faculties. There is no one who wants to take the chance receiving a citation.

This will also eliminate the Industry time in court over citations that they normally wouldn't receive if they were allowed full chart weight

The Courts will not have to take the time to deal with citations that are considered Misdemeanors. Business Owners and Attorney's are currently required to attend appearances to represent their companies.

The 700 pound allowable overweight is so small, that Industry has made it a common practice to take parts off these units to make weights and have the parts hauled on a separate truck. This practice continues to cost the Industry and the Consumers. Conversely, Industry has been forced to add unnecessary weight to their units to build in a reasonable safety margin. This weight is removed after an inspection report is obtained.

Air Quality is a factor in our request - less Trucks on the roads equals less pollution.

Public Safety is a factor in our request, less Trucks means fewer miles, fewer accidents, and fewer traffic fatalities.

Congestion Management is a factor in our request, less Truck miles equals less congestions.

### **IMPACT**

The impact of receiving unnecessary citations and jeopardizing a companies permit privilege, could result in putting a company out of business.

When the rules are so strict or unfair, it forces company's to avoid the scales whenever necessary, taking longer routes and posing more of a safety concern.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

Currently fixed load vehicles are being modified to remove their running gear and hauled as a load on a trailer to eliminate the reducible load policy.

For example, Crushers on their own running gear and weighing 56,300 lbs, will be allowed an extra 700 pounds of permitted weight for a total of 57,000 lbs. We can take that same Crusher, cut the axles out from underneath it (which we are doing) and put it on a lowbed trailer with the same axle configuration and be permitted 60,000 lbs., regardless of the actual axle weight. Additionally overweight misdemeanor citations are being issued if they exceed the reducible load weights and the permittee is spending time in court over this issue.

This continued problem is only raising the stress level of the drivers that are being put in position of not knowing if they are close on their axle weights. Drivers wonder if they have taken enough handrails off or panels to bring the unknown weight down. When we talk about 700 lbs tolerance, you are hoping that the steel plate that they had to weld on to repair the crusher doesn't put you over weight. The weights of asphalt silos fluctuate with accumulated build up after the day-to-day use. Again, we are not asking for increase in weight to exceed chart weight, only the chart weight that you are already allowing.

A fixed load that is 1000 lbs over green weight is routed as maximum purple weight (41,000 - 46,000 = 5000 difference, compared to 41,000 + 700). Structures department only knows maximum green or maximum purple weight.

The Industry has invested an enormous amount of money into State of the Art Equipment and even older equipment in their fleets. They purchase components for this equipment that is expensive and then are dictated by Caltrans that they will only let you take with you the equipment required to complete the prime function. This practice may have been something that was acceptable in the past, but times have changed. You need to be ready and prepared immediately of a jobsite change or even an emergency situation. These are function changes depending on job-to-job requirements. We are not asking to be in excess of chart weight, but rather the maximum chart weight that is already being authorized to the Heavy Haul Industry.

We are requesting the change in the best interest of Public Safety, Air Quality, and better Congestion Management and to better the Economy of California.

### **Requestors' Name:**

HERO Organization

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